Your name
Your address
Your city, state, zip

Date

Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection
Attn: Kevin Brander, P.E.
205B Lowell St.
Wilmington, MA 01887

RE: Requested Revisions to the MassDEP SSO Reporting Form

Dear Mr. Brander,

I am writing to express my support for the proposed changes to the MassDEP SSO Reporting Form. Specifically, I feel it is vitally important that public notification be required when Sanitary Sewer Overflows are released into the environment and represent the potential to impact public health. I also support proposed changes that local Board of Health departments be required to be notified of Sanitary Sewer Overflow occurrences within 24 hours. SSOs are a public health risk and as such the public has a right to this information. SSO information can be made readily available to the public via websites, local and regional media sources, signage, door hangers, telephone notification, or other measures as deemed appropriate by the municipality or the agency responsible for the overflow.

*Make this letter stronger by personalizing it!*

* Why is this issue important to you? (ex. As a boater? Dog walker? Doctor or nurse?)
* Do you have a story to share about water quality concerns?

According to the Mystic River Watershed Steering Committee, SSOs have occurred at over 210 locations in the watershed during the past ten years. In fact, during the March 2010 storms, an estimated 60 million gallons of SSO discharge (untreated sewage/rainwater) was released into the water bodies of the Mystic including the main stem of the Mystic River itself. Nine sites were located that released in excess of 1 million gallons each. Despite the large volumes released and the concerns about public health, no effort at public notification was made. The result was that many people were unknowingly being exposed to untreated sewage. By updating the SSO Reporting Form to require alerting local Board of Health departments, as is proposed, MassDEP can begin to help keep the public informed and safe. Additional public notification through local newspapers, community group websites and other public postings should also be required in those communities directly affected by these SSO events.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Your signature
Your printed name

Cc:

Philip Griffiths

Undersecretary for Environment

100 Cambridge Street

Boston, MA 02114

Kenneth L. Kimmel

Commissioner

Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection

One Winter Street

Boston, MA 02108